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Wiki Assignment # 3

***Statement of the Problem:*** Favoritism is part of life, whether it is in the home, school or work. In my opinion, teachers have perhaps a greater responsibility than parents or bosses to be alert to and avoid inequities and biases. Why do teachers have such responsibility? Perhaps because it is where children learn about social justice and fairness, empathy, consideration for others, and a host of other social behaviors that help create a civilized society; and, because the classroom may be the first place where children are introduced to and function a community atmosphere.

Children do not always learn from a lesson plan, but rather from the example of the teacher leading the class day-after-day. This is a very powerful position. If the teacher fails to practice fairness, that is he/she appears to call on children of a certain gender, ethnicity, etc., over others, it implies that this behavior is acceptable. It could be the teacher has what are clear and compelling reasons for choosing these students, such as trying to keep them engaged with the activity or lesson. Or, conversely, the teacher may be totally unaware they fall into a statistical norm—teachers tend to call on boys more often than girls.

Whatever the reason, studies prove that the teacher-child relationship can impact the academic and emotional wellbeing of children for many years to come. As educators, it is important that we be aware of what favoritism looks like and create strategies and interventions to avoid it, as much as possible, in our classroom.

***Research Hypothesis:*** There is favoritism practiced in classrooms. Teachers are generally unaware that they practice favoritism. Children in the classroom feel the effects of favoritism.

I believe that even with all the research that has been done, many teachers are unaware that they practice favoritism in their classroom. Often it is an inadvertent classroom management technique to engage boys and keep them directed—if they are called on more often they are more likely to be attentive. This may be true, but then those whose behavior is more in control, i.e. girls, will not be called to answer in an equitable manner and will not be provided with the same attention from the teacher. In this way, negative behavior is rewarded because the teacher pays more attention to those students. Quieter, well-behaved students fail to get the recognition they deserve and may even disconnect from the lesson because there is no teacher attention awarded to them.

***Action Research:*** I plan on observing at least one class, and hopefully two or three, to test my hypothesis. After the observation(s), I would like to survey the teacher(s) and the students as to their impression of what happens during the lesson (that is, do they perceive that certain students are called more often than others?). A proven intervention, found in researching the literature, will be provided to the teacher(s) to use in the classroom. A follow up observation and survey will be used to determine if teachers and students believe that the change has been effective and beneficial to the class.